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Ministry of Waqfs
The Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs

ISLAM AND SCIENCE
— 4 —

by
Prof. Dr. M. G. El-Fandy
Head of the Committee of Experts

1414 – 1993

Under the Supervision of :
Dr. Muhammad Ali Mahgoub

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
AL - RAHMAN (THE BENEFICENT)
AL - RAHIM (THE MERCIFUL)

PREFACE

The original text of the Holy Qurân is still preserved entirely in every respect of its original language word by word. Records and order of the revelation of the Holy Qurân were so faithfully made such that as time marches on one can say and report with precision, the actual place and time of revelation of each verse.

For such reasons it is known everywhere that the Holy Qurân has retained its purity without the least change up to now.

The language of the Book is the living Arabic. This is generally not the case with regard to old and extinct languages. Moreover, there is no fear of mixing the Holy Qurân with human interpretations, or even with the Traditions of the Prophet. In this sense Allah says what means:

Lo ! We even We, revealed Al - Zikr (the Holy Qurân) and verily We are its Guardian.

- Al - Hijr (9) -.

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا ٱلذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾ الحجر (٩)

Amongst the facts concerning the Holy Qurân is that it is regarded as the principal source of Islam. It lays down the law of the relation of man to Allah, and includes the fundamentals of the principles governing the human race. Allah the Al-Mighty says what means:

So set your purpose for religion as a man by nature upright - the nature framed by Allah, in which He has created people; there is no altering to Allah's creation; that is the right religion but most people know not.

- Al - Room (The Romans) (30) -.

﴿ فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ
فِطْرَتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِي فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾ الروم (٣٠)

No translation whatever, into English or any other language, can do justice to the magnificent Arabic poetic style of the Holy Qurân. Allah the Almighty says what means:

And so We have revelad to you Arabic Qurân.

- Al - Shura (7) -.

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا ﴾ الشورى (٧)

In fact, any verses selected as examples in any book of this series are mainly of simplified nature and may not give exact idea of the passages which fill the Holy Qurân with spiritual power.

UNIVERSALITY OF ISLAM

I. THE VOCATION OF MAN BETWEEN THE LAW OF PEOPLE AND THE LAW OF ALLAH.

History tells us that the outstanding success which Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace be upon him) achieved, within the limited time of twenty - three years, is ranked as the completion of the most supreme effort with no parallel. An entire change in the thought and behaviour of a whole generation towards goodness and godliness had been realized by a single man !

In addition to that, the almost unlimited teachings of ethical, moral and spiritual values which his message set up into motion, still march on in the Muslim world.

The Holy Qurân is basically addressed to intelligent and understanding individuals. It invites man to observe carefully everything round him in existence and thus to reflect upon it carefully. Knowledge acquired by the Holy Qurân is of the highest rank. To acquire it, purity in faith and concentration of mind are both essential prerequisites. In this respect the Book says for example what means :

1 - And when the Qurân is recited give ear to it and pay heed that you may be offered mercy.

- Al - Aaraf (204) - .

﴿ وَإِذَا قُرِئَ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟ لَهُۥ وَأَنصِتُوا۟ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾ ﴾

(الأعراف ٢٠٤)

2 - They only are the (true) believers whose hearts feel fear when Allah is mentioned, and when His revelations are recited to them they increase in faith and they trust in their Master.

- Al - Anfal (2) -

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـٰتُهُۥ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَـٰنًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾ الأنفال (٢)

Fairly enough, it is expected that the Book, provided it is properly understood, would lead to discoveries concerning the secrets of nature. At the same time careful study of nature will help in the proper interpretation and understanding of the Book. Naturally, as human knowledge advances the Holy Qurân unfolds itself gradually, Allah the Almighly says what means :

3 - We shall show them Our portents in the horizons (vast extensions) and in themselves until it becomes manifested to them that it (the Holy Qurân is the truth.)

- Fussilat (53) -

﴿ سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَـٰتِنَا فِى الْـَٔافَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ﴾ فصلت (٥٣)

II. ISLAM A UNIVERSAL ATTITUDE

From the first moment anyone embraces Islam (the noble message of universal fraternization) his race, colour and nationality sink into insignificance before the vast conception of humanity and equality for which Islam opens his mind. For example the Holy Qurân says what means :

1 - O mankind; We created you from a single (pair) of male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other; the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous; for sure Allah is all knowing and all reckoning.

- Al - Hujurat (13) -

2 - Say O followers of the Book come to a proposition equitable between you and us, that we shall not worship any but Allah and that we shall not take others for masters besides Him.

- Al - Imran (64) -.

﴿ قُلْ يَـٰأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا .... ﴾ آل عمران (٦٤)

3 - In the name of Allah, Al - Rahman (the Beneficent), Al - Rahim (the Most Merciful). All praise is due to Allah Master of all the worlds. Al - Rahman (the Beneficent) Al - Rahim (the most Merciful). Owner of the Day of Judgement. You, do we worship and Your aid do we seek. Guide us on the straight way. The way on whom you has bestowed Your grace, neither of those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor of those who go astray.

- Alfatiha - (1-7).

﴿ بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾
ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣﴾
مَٰلِكِ يَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٤﴾ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ
نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾ ٱهْدِنَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾
صِرَٰطَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ ٱلْمَغْضُوبِ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

الفاتحة (١ - ٧)

The seminal principles, and even the real basis of Islamic economies declare that the earth is Allah's own property. This principle, however, is a self- evident fact since originally Allah alone created the earth - No body whoever can arrogate its possession to himself or rather can claim that he was the creator. All the human beings were, and are still, created out of its very dust and water (mud or clay). The Holy Qurân says what means :

1 - From it (the earth) did We create you and into it shall We return you back...).

- Taha (55) -.

﴿ مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ .... ﴾ طه (٥٥)

2 - And Allah has produced you from the earth growing gradually. Then into it He returns you back...).

- Nooh (17 - 18) -.

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ أَنۢبَتَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
نَبَاتًا ﴿١٧﴾ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا .... ﴾ نوح (١٧ - ١٨)

3 - .... He (Allah) has produced you from the earth and settled you therein...)

- Hood (61) -.

﴿ .... هُوَ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱسْتَعْمَرَكُمْ فِيهَا.............................. ﴾ هود (٦١)

4 - And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth...

- Al - Imran (189) -.

﴿ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ .... ﴾ ال عمران (١٨٩)

Allah offered us the earth to dwell in, after being prepared

by Him to yield its riches to man, provided man knows how to handle this gift properly, Allah the Almighty says what means:

5 - And indeed We have written in Al - Zaboor (David's Book) after being written in Al - Zikr (the Old Testament) that the earth is inherited by My worshippers who are fit for its goodness (to populate it).

- Al - Anbiyaa (105) - .

﴿ وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي ٱلزَّبُورِ مِنۢ

بَعْدِ ٱلذِّكْرِ أَنَّ ٱلْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ ٱلصَّٰلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ ﴾ الأنبياء (١٠٥)

III. PEACE IN ISLAM

Peace means in Arabic the word (salam). The same word is amongst the names of Allah, as well as the name of the Paradise as quoted by the Holy Qurân. The same word (salam) is also the common salutation of greeting in Islam.

1 - For them is Dar Al - Salam (dwelling of peace) granted to them by their Master and He is their Sustainer in recompense for their works.

- Al - Anaam (127) -

﴿ لَهُمْ دَارُ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ ﴾ الانعام (١٢٧)

2 - And Allah calls to Dar Al - Salam (the abode of peace) and He guides whom He wishes into the right way.

- Yunus (25) -

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ دَارِ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾ يونس (٢٥)

Contrary to what appears to occur today by some fanatics in their efforts to propagate Islam, Muslim advocates have to act in complete compliance with Allah's words which mean:

Summon you to the way of thy Master with wisdom and with proper advice and argue them in the kindest manner: your Master best knows those who stray from His way and He best

knows those who have yielded to His guidance.

- Al - Nahl (125) - .

﴿ ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾ ﴾ النحل (١٢٥)

Muslim advocates never forced anybody to embrace Islam. They fought only for defence and to ensure or realize peace.

Again, it is accepted that good and evil are inherent in the human race, but still there is a strife between them in the individual as well as in the society. For this reason, Islam allows conditional warfare mainly to repel the aggression.

Islam also stimulates the faculties of the mind to the proper discharge of their functions and to arouse them to the activity for which they are created, notably to acquire immunity against teachings which, being inconsistent with man's life and nature, do not stand to reason. For example, one reads in the Holy Qurân what means:

1 - O man, consider your food. We cause rain to pour down in copious measures. Then We cleave the earth into clefts; and We cause grain to grow in it; and grapes and clover, and the olive and the palm; and gardens of various trees; and fruit and herbage; for your own benefit and for your cattle.

- Abasa (24 - 32) - .

﴿ فَأَنۢبَتۡنَا فِيهَا حَبّٗا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَعِنَبٗا وَقَضۡبٗا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَزَيۡتُونٗا وَنَخۡلٗا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَحَدَآئِقَ غُلۡبٗا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَفَٰكِهَةٗ وَأَبّٗا ﴿٣١﴾ مَّتَٰعٗا لَّكُمۡ وَلِأَنۡعَٰمِكُمۡ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾ عبس (٢٤ ـ ٣٢)

Does this not urge man to reflect on the way his food is produced? Is it not part of the science now called (botany) !

2 - Do they not (the unbelievers) contemplate the Kingdom of the Heavens and the Earth and all things that Allah has created and consider that peradventure their death may be drawing near,? So in what sort of book after it (the Holy Qurân) will they believe?

- Al - Araf (185) - .

﴿ أَوَلَمۡ يَنظُرُواْ فِي مَلَكُوتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ مِن شَيۡءٖ وَأَنۡ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ قَدِ ٱقۡتَرَبَ أَجَلُهُمۡۖ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثِۭ بَعۡدَهُۥ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾ ﴾ الأعراف (١٨٥)

3 - Have they not journeyed through the earth and seen what has been the end of those who came before them? They were, by far mightier and they broke up the earth (for water and minerals) and rendered the land more populous and prosperous and their apostles came to them with evident proofs of their missions, yet Allah would not wrong them but they wronged themselves.

- Al - Room (9) -

﴿ أَوَلَمۡ يَسِيرُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَيَنظُرُواْ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن

قَبْلِهِمْ كَانُوٓا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارُوا الْأَرْضَ وَعَمَرُوهَآ
أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا وَجَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ
لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ الروم (٩)

For sure, people to whom such revelation could be given (Muslims), would not escape understanding technical expeditions to investigate the conditions and status in the past nations. Such investigations naturally lead to the study of (history) and (sociology).

True Islam, thus, urges its followers to study and investigate all sides of Allah's creations in heavens and on earth. During the first few hundred years that followed the revelation Muslims did so. That glorious age was soon followed by the spreading out of misleading thought and degeneration.

The present atmosphere of religion (faith) is almost saturated with diversity, divergence and even enmity! But, however, Islam invites those who are votaries and believers to come to one principle comprising :

1 - Worshipping Allah only.
2 - Joining hands.
3 - Progress and civilization are not other names for differentiation.

In the tribal days, when the world was in its primitive stages homogenity worked well in every family. Every person did almost everything for himself, and cared for the needs of his family only. There prevailed stagnation with almost no progress.

By some way or another, man gradually came to discover the

value of division of labour. Occupations were ultimately given to different units of one and the same family. Villages came into existence and grew into towns and cities, which, brought together, gave birth to countries...

The question thus arises :

If this represents the natural way of progress in our material life, why should it not apply to religion? Certainly, religion is higher and nobler than that. It is something elevating. Its essence comprised and impulsed into (morality) and (ethics), which in turn sublimated into the so-called (soul). In other words, religion turned our deadly and vanishable materialism into alive and eternal spirituality. The history of religions is, therefore, a history of the development of ethreal specks into ethics, and variety in religion is merely a result of natural progress and development of mental and spiritual thought.

The world of our day is, however, on the move to universality. All the congresses, conferences and international leagues are mere hankering of man towards universal Brotherhood.

Again, as regards differences in religion, the common feature is that every person believes that only his faith came from Allah! This belief is most emphasized by some fanatics pretending to devote themselves to religion. However, this state of affairs went on for centuries, and unfortunately it goes up to now.

Allah makes no difference between the individuals. He knows no distinction between races, colours... Every one of us is responsible for his own deeds only in the present earthly life. Allah made the same earth, the same sun and the same moon to benefit the world. He says in the Holy Qurân what means:

Surely those who believe (the Muslims) and those who follow the Jewish (Scriptures) and the Sabians and the Christians,

of them who believe in Allah and the Last Day and work righteousness shall have their reward with their Master : On them shall be neither fear nor shall they grieve.

- Al - Maida (69) - .

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ وَٱلصَّٰبِـُٔونَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ ﴾ المائدة (٦٩)

Evidently, it is Islam which declared these Gospels of universalism, for the first time in history, in order to bring different religions into closer good relations of fraternity.

Surely, every nation has been given a Messenger from Allah, and there has been no class of people but had its Warner from Allah. The Holy Qurân says what means :

1 - And for sure We have sent in every nation an apostle....)

- Al - Nahl (36)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِى كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا .... ﴾ النحل (٣٦)

2 - ... There has been no race (of people) but had its Warner (from Allah).

- Fatir (23) -.

﴿ . ... وَإِن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾ فاطر (٢٣)

3 - Say (you Muslims), we believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us and (in) that which has been revealed to Ibrahim and Ismail and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus and (in) that which was given to the Prophets from their Master; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit.

- Al - Baqara (136) -.

قُولُوٓا ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ
وَإِسْمَـٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَـٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ
وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ
مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ البقرة (١٣٦)

Muslims therefore find no difficulty in accepting the Divine origin of every other religion besides Islam, Allah The Almighty says what means:

All people were a single nation, so Allah raised Prophets as bearers of Good News and as Warners and He revealed with them the Book with truth...).

- Al - Baqara (213) -.

﴿ كَانَ
ٱلنَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ
وَأَنزَلَ مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ .... ﴾ البقرة (٢١٣)

Undoubtedly, ail of us are worshipping one and the same God, Who is the common source of all guidance to the human race. No two revealed religions, in their original purity, could ever minister to humanity principles contradictory or baneful teachings to human salvation. Allah the Almighty says what means:

Say you believers in the different Books; come to a rightful agreement between us and you : not to worship except Allah and not to associate with Him any other thing....

- Al - Imran (64) -

﴿ قُلْ يَـٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا .... ﴾ آل عمران (٦٤)

In Islam one is supposed to live mainly in order to work out what is conductive to the best interests of his people and of humanity in general, in terms of obeying Allah and not going astray Allah the Almighty says what means:

Say, for sure my prayers and my sacrifices and my life and my death are all for Allah the Master of the worlds.

- Al - Anaam (163) -

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ
صَلَاتِى وَنُسُكِى وَمَحْيَاىَ وَمَمَاتِى لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴾ الأنعام (١٦٣)

The Holy Qurân is, in fact, the outstanding present support for the truthfulness of most of the Prophets. For example, the

fact that Jesus had no father receives convincing defense from the Holy Qurân...

Let us do away with the gulf separating followers of the various creeds. Let us kill our disputes in adoration of Allah, and worship ONE AND THE SAME GOD ONLY.

Certainly Allah does not forgive associating others with Him and forgives lesser sins to whom He pleases.

- Al - Nisaa (48) -

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ﴾ النساء (٤٨)

Most of the troubles can be got over through worshipping one God. This is the natural, universal and ideal religion. In this sense Allah addresses Prophet Mahummad (prayers and peace be upon him) by saying what means:

And We have not raised you but for all the peoples as bearer of Good News and as warner.

- Sabaa (28) -

﴿ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا كَآفَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴾ سبا (٢٨)

THE MUSLIM WOMAN

I. VEIL

The position of women in the Islamic Society is unique and outstanding according to the teachings of the Holy Qurân. Adultery is strictly prohibited and fundamentals of decency and good behaviour are proclaimed. There is not a single verse which orders (harim life). Even conservative authorities do not feel it necessary to communicate the Turks or the Iranians in this respect. Most of them have already given up seclusion.

To cover, by any dress, certain parts of our bodies which are not normally left naked is essential, but still the Holy Qurân gives priority to the spiritual dress of decency and good behaviour. Allah the Almighty says what means:

O sons of Adam We did send down upon you dresses not to be naked and feathers and the dress of good behaviour and fear from Allah which is the best; such are of the signs of Allah that they may reckon.

- Al -Araf (26) -

﴿ يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ قَدۡ
أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكُمۡ لِبَاسٗا يُوَٰرِي سَوۡءَٰتِكُمۡ وَرِيشٗاۖ وَلِبَاسُ ٱلتَّقۡوَىٰ
ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٞۚ ذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ٢٦ ﴾ الأعراف (٢٦)

It happened that in order to assure protection for the wives

of the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) and for members of the families of the early Muslims when they mingled with the people in Al - Madina, which was a centre for numerous groups of unbelievers, the Holy Qurân said what means:

O Prophet say to your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they draw together their over-garments; this will be more proper, that they may be known and thus they will not face trouble, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

- Al - Ahzab (59) -

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل
لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَآءِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِن
جَلَـٰبِيبِهِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَن يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ
غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥٩﴾ ﴾ الاحزاب (٥٩)

However, there is a verse of direct concern with the problem of veil. This verse says what means:

Say to the believing men that they should cast down their looks and guard their private parts, that is purer for them; surely Allah is aware of what they do. And say to the believing women that they should cast down their looks and guard their private parts and not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their headcoverings over their bosoms, and not display their ornaments except to their husbands or their fathers or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or their sister's sons, or their women, or those whom their right hands possess, or the male servants not having need (of women), or the

children who have not attained knowledge of what is hidden of women, and let them not strike their feet so that what is hidden of their ornaments may be known, and turn to Allah all of you, O believers, so that you may be successful.

Al - Noor (30 - 31)-

﴿ قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا۟ مِنْ أَبْصَٰرِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا۟ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَٰرِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا ۖ وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۖ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ ءَابَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ ءَابَآءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَآءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِىٓ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِىٓ أَخَوَٰتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُنَّ أَوِ ٱلتَّٰبِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُو۟لِى ٱلْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ أَوِ ٱلطِّفْلِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا۟ عَلَىٰ عَوْرَٰتِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۖ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِن زِينَتِهِنَّ ۚ وَتُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

النور (٣٠ ـ ٣١)

The interpretation of learned Islamic commentators regards the word (ornaments) as referring to both jewellery and fancy articles of clothing. The phrase (let them not strike their feet) is interpreted as an order to refrain from rattling their anklets or any thing that might suggest a lascivious glance.

II. MARRIAGE

Muslim women sometimes sacrifice independence of action, notably marriage, to gain social prestige. In Islam, however, there is no specific age for the marriage of adult girls, but, related to the modern ideal of marriage, which is determined by the choice of the individual and not the arrangement of parents, is the marked trend towards a suitable marriage age for girls. Generally, the ideal of marriage by individual choice leads to a later marriage age.

In the Middle East and in the Near East, recent studies indicate that generally in the upper classes, notably among the educated, the age of marriage tends to be higher than in the lower classes.

Throughout the East, parents, especially mothers, are usually afraid that the daughter's marriage chances jeopardize if postponed beyond the usual custom of the country, or even the family. Generally speaking, in most countries the legal age of marriage for girls exceeds sixteen years and for boys it exceeds eighteen years of age.

Polygamy is permitted in Islam, but only under very strict conditions. This is also the case with divorce. Polygamy is limited to those who can live on good terms and care for the family they already have charge of. Lack of sons or sterility are the inevitable causes for the husband's second or third marriage. The Holy

Qurân says in this respect what means:

1 - .... And marry women of your (own) choice, two or three or four, but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with them then only one...

- Al - Nisaa (3)-

﴿ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ

وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً .... ﴾ النساء (٣)

2 - And you will never be able to deal justly with women even if you are keen to be so....

- Al - Nisaa (129) -

﴿ وَلَن تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَن تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ ...... ﴾ النساء (١٢٩)

Polygamy and divorce bear a close relationship in regard to the problem of prestige, and they are now no longer cosidered quite respectable.

Generally, by nature, the normal man excels the normal woman Allah the Almighty says what means:

Men are the mantainers of women, because Allah has made some to excel others; and because they (men) spend out of their property; the good women are therefore pious, guarding in the absence (of their men) what Allah has ordained....

- Al - Nisaa (34)-.

﴿ الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا

فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ ۚ
فَٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ قَٰنِتَٰتٌ حَٰفِظَٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ ......﴾ النساء (٣٤)

According to Islam, Muslim women have the right to include in the marriage contract certain articles on which they may be granted a divorce according to their demand.

The great majority of Muslim women prefer not to be independent wage - earners, but by working in their houses they always contribute to the income of their families. The Muslim woman from this point of view is an economic asset to her home, but still not generally economically independent.

III. STATUS OF THE MUSLIM WOMAN.

Before the age of Science, religion has always been the effective tool for social action. In the earlier days of Islam, the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) was inspired by the ideal of elevating the position of women of his day and improving social conditions without violating the prevailing concept of masculine superiority. The teachings of the Holy Qurân represented social reform movement against the existing practices which were significant for those days, and so included mainly :

1 - Abolition of infanticide.
2 - Putting limits and restrictions to polygamy.
3 - Protection of widows and orphans.
4 - Declaration of marriage contract.
5 - Establishment of inheritance right to women.
6 - Bounds of veil to the purpose.

At present, in the light of scientific progress, which is also the message of Islam, vast changes have taken place in the position of the Muslim women. These changes represent phases of fundamental renaissance including :

1 - Educational opportunities.
2 - Occupying various jobs.
3 - Widening of the field of woman's interest beyond the four walls of her home.

Some authorities now argue that harmonizing the spirit of Islam with modern thought represents various stages of advance. Nevertheless, almost all Muslims recoginze the authority of Islam to determine the bounds of social progress.

In the last few decades Al-Azhar authorities in Egypt achieved the foundation of several new faculties under the name of "Al - Azhar University", which is responsible for teaching boys and girls, separated, modern languages, science, literature, medicine, agriculture and engineering..

Naturally, lines of welfare and philanthropy, care of orphans, charity affairs, simple embroidery, workshops... and employment scheme, furnish the objectives for societies or clubs of high - class women as organizers. However, education of women now furnishes the motif concerning group action amongst women, notably those who became ministers.

Finally, according to the spirit and teachings of Islam, Muslim women have keenly became aware of their responsibility to promote peace, and the Muslim educated woman already assumes her responsibility as a world wide citizen.

Once more, the major factor in the decline of the Muslim civilization was the closing of the Door of Regeneration, notably in the woman world after being mingled with several old customs in the various countries reached by the Muslims. For such reasons Muslim authorities now have to do their best in order to direct the course of events into the true Muslim virtues for the good of the world at large.

FAITH
A NECESSITY

I. THE MEANING OF FAITH IN ISLAM

Faith is regarded as the base and first outstanding principle in Islam. The Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) had to stay about thirteen years at the beginning of his mission to affirm this principle. His common definition of faith (as Tradition) is that : (Faith is something embedded in the heart and justified by deeds and bahaviour.

As a matter of extreme regret, one observes that nowadays, faith has been widely misunderstood and Islam has been greatly misconceived by various numerous agglomerations of Muslims going rather astray. Amongst these are :

A- The fanatics who are not righteous followers of the Holy Qurân which says what means:

1 - Invite (people) to the way of your Master with wisdom and good advice and argue them with the ideal...

- Al - Nahl (125)-

﴿ ٱدۡعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلۡحِكۡمَةِ وَٱلۡمَوۡعِظَةِ ٱلۡحَسَنَةِۖ وَجَٰدِلۡهُم بِٱلَّتِي هِيَ أَحۡسَنُۚ .... ﴾ النحل (١٢٥)

2 - And fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostility; so Allah loves not the aggressors.

- Al - Baqara (190).

﴿ وَقَٰتِلُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمۡ وَلَا تَعۡتَدُوٓاْۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُعۡتَدِينَ ١٩٠ ﴾ البقرة (١٩٠)

3 - And if they incline to peace incline you also to it and trust in Allah; lo; He is the Hearer the Knower.

- Al - Anfal (61) -

﴿ وَإِن جَنَحُواْ لِلسَّلۡمِ فَٱجۡنَحۡ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ٦١ ﴾ الأنفال (٦١)

4 - Do they not (the unbelievers) contemplate the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth and all things that Allah has created and consider that peradventure their death may be drawing near; in what other book will they believe if they reject it (The Qurân)?.

- Al - Aaraf (185) -

﴿ أَوَلَمۡ يَنظُرُواْ فِي مَلَكُوتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ مِن شَيۡءٖ وَأَنۡ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ قَدِ ٱقۡتَرَبَ أَجَلُهُمۡۖ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثِۭ بَعۡدَهُۥ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ١٨٥ ﴾ الأعراف (١٨٥)

B - Some of the Prophet's Traditions, and even the Qurânic Verses, have been misinterpreted, and led certain agglomerations of primitive Muslims to go astray and to provide false exmples as regards the Muslim communities.

C - The selfish motives of some of the so -called "religious

personnel" are responsible - to some extent - for the unhappy state of affairs, notably amongst those who blow their trumpets as the true followers of Islam!!

D - Some people, particularly those who know nothing real about Islam, call it "Muhamadanism, after the name of Muhammad (prayers and peace be upon him). For sure, there is no relation whatsoever between the two names.

Islam is not the monopoly of any man or tribe. All people who submit themselves to the will and laws of Allah come within its fold and are called Muslims.

In fact, literally, the word Islam means submisson, of course submission to Allah, The Creator, The Almighty, wholeheartedly and with no mental reservation.

In Books 1, 2 and 3 of this series it has been emphasized and made clear that the greater part of the Qurânic verses are cosmic verses which urge us to discover the secrets of Allah's creation of all sorts of matter and radiation.

If we look into the universe with a will to understand and realize what is behind it, we can at once see that it is governed and controlled by (physical laws) which are unaltered neither with space nor with time.

Man, gifted with talents and intelligence, is born and brought up under the influence and control of systems which are defined by the so-called "human physiology", and which function within the limitations of fixed laws.

Naturally, the unbelievers do not recognise the above mentioned facts, and the indisputable truth behind the universe and its laws, which Muslims call Allah, The Almighty. The unbelievers dismiss (as fables of the olden times) the fact that

Islam is the last righteous religion on earth! They feel ashamed of admitting that (Adam) and (Hawa) are our father and mother, as the Holy Qurân says, and yet they feel proudy of claiming themselves to be the descendants of monkeys!! The Holy Qurân says what means :

.... Those (the unbelievers) are like cattle; nay more misguided, for those are the heedless.

- Al - Aaraf (179) -

﴿ .... أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
كَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾ ﴾ الأعراف (١٧٩)

Now, is it not disappointing and disheartening that man, who can acquire more and more knowledge by progress in science, goes astray and unmindful of faith, even nominal faith!? Is it not much better to become under the class of people who could earn Allah's pleasure. Let us see what the Holy Qurân says as examples concerning this matter :

1 - And when they meet those who believe they say we believe, but when they become alone with their devils they say we are with you, we were merely jesting.

- Al - Baqara (14) -

﴿ وَإِذَا لَقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ شَيَٰطِينِهِمْ
قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾ البقرة (١٤)

2 - Say who is it that sustains you (in life) from the sky and from the earth? Or who is it that has power over hearing and sight?

And who is it that brings out the alive from the dead and the dead from the alive? And who is it that rules and regulates all affairs? They will say Allah; say then will you not show piety (to Allah).

- Yunus (31) -

﴿ قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّن يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَن يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَن يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (٣١) ﴾ يونس (٣١)

3 - I have not created jinns and men except to worship Me.

- Al - Thariat (56) -

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (٥٦) ﴾ الذاريات (٥٦)

Allah has given Holy Books comprising His commandments to some of Prophets such as : Musa, Dawood, Issa and Muhammad. They had been respectively given the : Tawrah, Zaboor, Ingiel and the Qurân.

They all agree about the so-called Last Day. Subsequent to that Day, all wise living beings will be brought to trial. It is incumbent on everyone to believe that all his good deeds and his evil deeds will be considered and weighed.

In a word, one can say that faith in Islam means to believe in : (1) Allah, (2) the Angels of Allah, (3) the Holy Books, (4) the Prophets of Allah and (5) the Last Day.

In the past times, and to a limited extent at present, people worshipped the sun, the moon, the planets, the sea, the fire... and even the cow!! All Allah's prophets invited people to believe in the oneness of God, and the Holy Qurân records many instances when most prophets were rediculed, ignored and even persecuted. This used to take place inspite of the fact that each prophet came for the enlightenment of his own people and for guiding them to the righteous way. Only Muhammad (prayers and peace be upon him) came for the good of all the peoples on earth. Allah the Almighty says what means:

And we have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds.

- Al - Anbiyaa (107) -

﴿ وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ إِلَّا رَحۡمَةٗ لِّلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ١٠٧ ﴾ الأنبياء (١٠٧)

This, naturally, means that every Muslim is invited and requested to deliver the message of Islam and to teach it to non-muslims in his reach.

This readily means that the message of Islam in an extended responsibity.

II. GOODNESS OR KINDNESS IN ISLAM

Goodness or kindness is a natural result of faith and outstanding virtues of humanity. The Arabic word in common use for goodness is (ihsan), which may stand for several meanings such as : excellence in work, charity affairs, bestowing favour, mercifulness, doing things well... Another equal word is (birr).

When a man performs his duty towards Allah and people as well, he is regarded in Islam to have done and achieved favour to himself. Allah says what means :

Whoso does good it is for himself and his (soul) and who does evil it is against it and your Master is not a tyrant to His servants.

- Fussilat (46) -

﴿ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ وَمَنْ أَسَآءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۗ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴾ فصلت (٤٦)

Some Muslims argue that (Ihsan) meaning goodness has two phases namely : 1 - Bestowing favours on others, and 2 - Excellence in work - The Holy Qurân quotes what means :

1 - Lo ! Allah enjoins justice and kindness...

- Al - Nahl (90)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ .... ﴾ النحل (٩٠)

2 - Lo ! Allah favours those who go righteously and those who

are kind.

- Al - Nahl (128) -

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَواْ وَّٱلَّذِينَ هُم مُّحْسِنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ ﴾ النحل (١٢٨)

3 - ... And be beneficent, for sure Allah loves the beneficent.

- Al - Baqara (195) -

﴿ .... وَأَحْسِنُوٓاْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾ ﴾ البقرة (١٩٥)

In Islam, however, goodness, in its broadest meaning, is one of the highest levels of worship. It is the essence, spirit and accomplishment of faith.

4 - Is the reward of goodness aught save goodness?.

- Al - Rahman (60) -

﴿ هَلْ جَزَآءُ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ إِلَّا ٱلْإِحْسَٰنُ ﴿٦٠﴾ ﴾ الرحمن (٦٠)

Prophet Muhammad (Allah's prayers and peace be upon him) said concerning goodness : (That you worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, He sees you). This points out to the absolute presence with Allah, and the necessity of bearing Him in mind, to fear, and still to love, Him, and thus to submit and become sincere to Him.

However, Allah knows every thing and He says, for example what means:

1 - We verily created man and We know what his soul whispers to him and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein.

- Qaf (16) -

﴿ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ
بِهِ نَفْسُهُ ۖ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾ ق (١٦)

2 - Have you not seen that Allah knows that is in the heavens and that is in the earth; there is no secret conference of three but He is their fourth, nor of five but He is their sixth, nor of less than that or more but He is with them wheresoever they may be, and later, on the day of Resurrection, He will inform them of what they did. Lo ! Allah is Knower of all things.

- Al - Mujadala (7)-

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ
مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَىٰ
ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَىٰ
مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ۖ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم
بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾ المجادلة (٧)

On top of all this, goodness also means spending money in aspects of vital importance to the community such that the giver, the taker and the whole nation achieve happiness. Allah says what means :

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the east and the west but righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Scripture and the Prophets and gives wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the

needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set slaves free, and observes (proper) prayer and pays the poor-due and those who keep their covenant when they make one, and the patient in tribulation and adversity and time of distress; such are they who are sincere; such are the God-fearing.

- Al - Baqara (177)-

﴿ لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا ۖ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾ ﴾

البقرة (١٧٧)

Goodness may also mean originality, depth and accuracy in our deeds. This particular meaning is made clear in the Prophet's Tradition, such as : (For sure Allah wishes from anyone of you doing something to accomplish it excellently).

Goodness may also mean giving gallantly, warding off evil and paying an ill-deed with a good one. Thus, one reads in the Holy Qurân what means :

1 - And the good deed and the evil deed are not alike; repel the evil deed with one which is better, then lo ! he between whom and you there was enmity (will become) as though he was a bosom friend . But none is granted it save those who are steadfast and none is granted it save the owner of a great fortune.

- Fussilat (34 - 35) -

2 - It was by the mercy of Allah that you were lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if you had been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about you.

- Al - Imran (159) -

﴿ فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّواْ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ﴾

آل عمران (١٥٩)

3 - Allah describes the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's prayers and pieace be upon him) in a verse which says what means :

You are of a tremendous nature.

- Al - Qalam (4) -

﴿ ....وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴾

القلم (٤)

THE MUSLIM THOUGHT

I - OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAM

Islam as a religion is distinguished from other religions by an outstanding characteristic quality establihsed by the verse which says what means :

Lo. The worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the deaf, the dumb who have no sense.

- Al - Anfal (22) -

﴿ إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ الأنفال (٢٢)

The verse declares that Islam categorically discards ignorance from the qualities of faithful Muslims.

As was made clear before (in Books 1, 2, 3), Islam, in effect, combines spiritualism and knowledge comprizing study of the material universe . The two form one whole in which knowledge is the food and spiritualism is the cure which cannot be effective without food.

Islam fights out ignorance and its teachings urge towards enlightenment and scientific research, because it regards science the principal means for advancement and proper way for civilization. It is the straight way along which the faithful can achieve happiness in the earthly life and in the hereafter. In this meaning one reads in the Holy Qurân what means :

1 - ...... Allah will raise those of you who believe (to great

and those (of you) who are given knowledge to even higher grades of honour...

- Al - Mujadalah (11) -

﴿ .... يَرْفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟

ٱلْعِلْمَ دَرَجَٰتٍ .... المجادلة (١١)

2 - And We have brought to them (the unbelievers) a Book We explained the meaning thereof with knowledge .... .

- Al - Aaraf (52) -

﴿ وَلَقَدْ جِئْنَٰهُم بِكِتَٰبٍ فَصَّلْنَٰهُ

عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ .... ﴾ الأعراف (٥٢)

As we have already seen, the Holy Qurân is full of verses that depict the scientific action and reaction of cosmic bodies and natural phenomena in the universe.

3 - We shall show them Our portents in the horizons and within themselves until it will be manifested to them that it is the truth; do not your Master suffice since He is witness over all things?.

- Fussilat (53) -

﴿ سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا فِى ٱلْءَافَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ

يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ

شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴾ فصلت (٥٣)

4 - .... We have neglected nothing in the Book.... .

- Al - Anaam (38)-

﴿........... مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِي ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِن شَيْءٍ .... ﴾ الانعام (٣٨)

5 - O you assembly of jinns and men ! If it be you are able to penetrate through the diameters of the Heavens and the Earth, then do penetrate; you will never penetrate through them save with (Our) sanction.

- Al - Rahman (33) -

﴿ يَٰمَعْشَرَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ إِنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَن تَنفُذُواْ مِنْ أَقْطَارِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنفُذُواْ لَا تَنفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَٰنٍ ﴾ الرحمن (٣٣)

This verse is regarded as indicative of man's ability to dominate space when Allah offers him the suitable theory and the technical means.

Space navigation is however, faced by many obstacles, but amongst the main difficulties comes the problem of protection against active cosmic rays and high energy ultraviolet radiation. In this respect the Holy Qurân again says what means :

6 - On you will be sent splinters of fire (cosmic radiation) and smokeless fire (ultraviolet radiation) and you lack defence.

- Al - Rahman (35) -

﴿ يُرْسَلُ

عَلَيْكُمَا شُوَاظٌ مِّن نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنتَصِرَانِ ﴾ الرحمن (٣٥)

The interplanetary space is practically an extension of the solar atmosphere. It starts near the sun by an outflow of extremely hot gases upon which are imposed plasma flows. High energy particles (cosmic radiation) are ejected into space.

7 - And you see the mountains you deem them solid yet they fly with the flight of clouds...

- Al - Naml (88) -

﴿ وَتَرَى

الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ ﴾ النمل (٨٨)

From the astronomical point of view is this verse not an evidence of the earth's rotations?

Naturally Allah is aware of man's need for knowledge in this life; and so science is the message of Islam.

Prophet Muhammad (prayers and blessings be upon him). says :

Imbue wisdom from whatever source it may come from .

The propagation of Islam and Islamic thought has not been the work of men only, but the Muslim woman has also participated partly in jobs. The causes that contributed to the

success of Muslims in spreading their religion are numerous :

Of these causes are :

1 - No God save Allah.
2 - Muhammad is just one of the prophets, and Islam should not be called Muhammadanism.
3 - Simplicity of the Muslim creed.
4 - No contradiction between Islam and science.

II. SOCIALISM OF KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION IN ISLAM

In the light of what has been mentioned before in this series of pocket - books, one can readily realize that Islam had induced vast impact on the progress of human thought and society. The Holy Qurân distinguishes the learned people from all others for bearing the torch of Divine Light and being Allah's agents to banish ignorance from the minds of mankind. The Holy Qurân says what means :

... Say, shall they who have knowledge and they who have it not be held equal?....

- Al - Zomar (9)-

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِى ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ .... ﴾ الزمر (٩)

Muhammad (prayers and peace be upon him) said :

1 - The search for knowledge is obligatory upon all Muslims males and females.

طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم ومسلمة

This, evidently means that every Muslim must learn and search for knowledge as a requisit by Islam.
2 - He who goes in search of learning is in the path of Allah until he returns back.

Islam also makes it incumbent upon those who have learned to teach others who have not. In most cases free instructions,

books, papers, pens, lamps, food and water were regularly supplied to the students. Board and lodging at the educational establishments were available without any charge. The ancient university of Al - Azhar (more than 1,000 years old) in Egypt is an example. In fact, al - Azhar remains as a good example of the Islamic universities elsewhere...

Prophet Muhammad (prayes and peace be upon him) also said about knowledge :

Seek knowledge even in China.

As said before, knowledge in Islam means all branches of learning conveyed by the word which the human mind could conceive of. This broad meaning is made clear by the Holy Qurân which says what means :

Do you not see that Allah sends down water from the sky thus We produce thereby fruits of varied hues and that in the mountains there are white and red tracks of different intensity and others of raven black colour? And of people, beasts and cattle there are likewise different hues? Verily, of all Allah's worshippers those who are imbued with knowledge fear Him most; surely Allah is Mighty, Gracious.

- Fatir (27 - 28)-

﴿ أَلَمْ

تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ ثَمَرَٰتٍ

مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهَا ۚ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌۢ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ

أَلْوَٰنُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ

وَالأَنْعَـٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ كَذَٰلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ
مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَـٰٓؤُا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴾ فاطر (٢٧ ـ ٢٨)

Recently Al - Azhar University established faculties for teaching modern scienes. Originally it was specialised mainly in religious sciences such as : proper reading of the Holy Qurân and its interpretation, traditions of the Prophet, language, and the like...

III. ABOUT THE PROPHECY OF MUHAMMAD

Muhammad (prayer and peace be upon him) would not have pretended to be a prophet (or claim prophecy) and yet suffer for his claim the most severe, dangerous and cruellest afflictions for about 23 years, without having rest, security or even peace.

Tens of thousands of his followers (the Sahaba) exposed themselves to loss of life and property without realizing from his claim any wealth, affluence, authority or splendour of the type which pretenders and their followers usually attain.

However, Muhammad's people sometimes offered him valuable property and sometimes authority and kingship to withdraw from his call to Islam which abolished their religions, discredited their intellects and nullified most of their habits.

Sometimes the revelation brought Muhammad (prayers and blessings be upon him) what caused him pain, or declared him mistaken in an opinion he had held, or even blamed him for an action of his. The following is an example.

(The Prophet) Frowned and turned away; because there came to him the blind man (interrupting); but what could tell you that perchance he might grow in spiritual understanding; or that he might receive admonition and the teaching might profit him; as to him who regards himself selfsufficient; to him do you attend; though it is no blame on you if he grows not (in spiritual understanding); but as to him who came to you striving earnestly; and with fear in his heart; of him were you unmindful; oh no....).

- Abasa (1 - 11) -

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١﴾ أَن جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ
لَعَلَّهُ يَزَّكَّىٰ ﴿٣﴾ أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنفَعَهُ الذِّكْرَىٰ ﴿٤﴾ أَمَّا مَنِ
اسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ فَأَنتَ لَهُ تَصَدَّىٰ ﴿٦﴾ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا
يَزَّكَّىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَن جَاءَكَ يَسْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَهُوَ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٩﴾
فَأَنتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ﴾ عبس (١ - ١١)

Moreover, whoever reads the Holy Qurân will find in it arguments with the Jews and the Christians regarding their beliefs and philosopby notably those concerning God. For example the Holy Qurân says what means :

1 - And the Jews said :

Allah's hand is tied up; be their hands tied up and be they accused for the (blasphemy) they utter...)

- Al - Maida (64)-

﴿ وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ ۚ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلُعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا ﴾ المائدة (٦٤)

2 - And the Jews call Uzair a son of Allah and the Christians call Christ the son of Allah; that is their saying by their mouths imitating what the unbelievers of old used to say; Allah's curse be on them as long as they are deluded away from the truth.

- Al - Tawba (30) -

﴿ وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ
النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ قَوْلُهُم بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ

يُضَٰهِـُٔونَ قَوْلَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ قَٰتَلَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ أَنَّىٰ
يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴾ التوبة (٣٠)

3 - They do blaspheme who say : (surely) Allah is the Christ son of Mary...

- Al - Maida. (72)-

﴿ لَقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ﴾ المائدة (٧٢)

4 - They do blaspheme who say : Allah is one of three in a trinity...

- Al- Maida (73) -

﴿ لَقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَٰثَةٍ ﴾ المائدة (٧٣)

From the finance point of view, Islam imposes upon every Muslim generally :

1 - A tax of 2.5 per cent when possessing ten gold pounds (or equivalent currency) per one year.
2 - An equivalent tax is also imposed upon trade goods.
3 - A tax on camels, sheep and goats whose proportion differed according to the difference in their number.
4 - A land tax and the tithe. A tenth of the harvest or a half, in accordance with the method of irrigation adopted, when the harvest amounts to fifty kilograms or more.

5 - The fitr tax is paid for every individual every Ramadan (for himself and those whom he supports.).

For non-Muslims, only a sort of poll - tax is imposed., whose amount is four dinars a year for the rich, two for the middle class

and one only for the poor. From these are exempted, the old, children, women , those who are unable to earn a living, those who are devoted to worshipping and slaves. Evidently, this means the people who are free, sane, able to work and do earn money, in return for the general services achieved by the state for its subjects. Of these services are : defence, building, digging canals, paying salaries.. etc..

Obviously, Islam imposed a mild tax on the land in exchange for its use. Muslims were, by comparison with others, the most human and merciful people the world has ever known. Some European writers as : Gustav Le Bon, Sir Thomas Arnold, Norman Baines and many others have reached the same conclusion.

SKY AND HEAVENS
ASTRONOMICALLY AND AS MENTIONED IN THE HOLY QURÂN

I WHAT SKY AND HEAVENS MEAN

For reasonably acceptable interpretation of the Qurânic verses, it is preferable to use the word "sky" to stand only for the earth's atmosphere and its blue dome which appears by day over our heads. The word "heavens" strictly means all the heavenly bodies from which the entire universe has been built up. The following verses readily reflect these two meanings :

1 - And We made the sky (the atmosphere) preserved roof yet they care not to recognize its (multiple) services.

- Al - Anbiyaa (32)-

﴿ وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ سَقْفًا مَّحْفُوظًا وَهُمْ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِهَا مُعْرِضُونَ ﴾ الأنبياء (٣٢)

As said before (in Book 3), the earth's atmosphere renders vital services to living creatures on earth, notably human beings.
2 - ... And the water that Allah sends down from the sky (nimbus clouds in the atmosphere), then gives life therewith to the earth after its death...

- Al - Baqara (164)-

﴿ وَمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِن مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ﴾ البقرة (١٦٤)

3 - That whom He wills to leave straying He makes his breast close and constricted as if he has to rise up in the sky.

- Al - Anâm (125) -

﴿ وَمَن
يُرِدْ أَن يُضِلَّهُۥ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُۥ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا
يَصَّعَّدُ فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴾ الأنعام (١٢٥)

It is well known that atmospheric oxygen decreases with increasing height above the earth's surface. This is why any individval rising up in the sky without external protection soon feels as though his breast has been constricted, - see aslo Book (2).

4 - With power and skill did We construct the heavens and indeed We are expanding them.

- Al - Zariyat (47) -

﴿ وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بَنَيْنَٰهَا بِأَيْيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ﴾ الذاريات (٤٧)

The receding of the galaxies and the consequent expansion of the universe are well known in astronomy.

5 - And not the weight of an atom in the earth or in the heavens is hidden from your Master.

- Unos (61) -

﴿ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَن رَّبِّكَ
مِن مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴾ يونس (٦١)

6 - .....And nothing is hidden from Allah either in the earth or in the heavens.

- Ibrahim (38) -

﴿ وَمَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيْءٍ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ

وَلَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴾ إبراهيم (٣٨)

7 - And indeed We have made zodiac-signs in the heaven and We have made it fair seeming to the beholders.

- Al - Hijr (16) -

﴿ وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ بُرُوجًا وَزَيَّنَّٰهَا لِلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴾ الحجر (١٦)

The planets and moon are always found in space within a narrow belt centered on the ecliptic, called the "zodiac" or (the zone of the animals). The zodiac was divided into twelve parts or "signs". Their representation on paper looks almost like decoration : Aries (ram), Taurus (bull), Gimini (twins), Cancer (crab), Leo (lion), Virgo (virgin), Libra (balance), Scorpio (scorpion), Sagittarius (archer), Capricornus (goat), Acquarius (water - bearer), and Pisces (fishes).

The blue sky which appears over our heads during daytime has no real existence. It is nothing more than the result of the scattering of sunlight in the lowest layers of the atmosphere extending to about 200 kilometers above the earth's surface. Scattering is produced by air-molecules, water - vapour and dust-particles suspended in the air. For true scattering of light to take place, the particles must be smaller than the wave-length of the scattered light, otherwise diffuse reflection takes place instead of scattering.

The amount of light-energy which may be scattered is inversely proportional to the fourth power of the wave length of the scattered light. In other words, when two waves of light of length 0.6 and 0.5 micron respectively are scattered, the ratio of the scattered energy will be :

$$\frac{\text{scattered energy (1)}}{\text{scattered energy (2)}} \quad \frac{.5 \times .5 \times .5 \times .5}{.6 \times .6 \times .6 \times .6}$$

$$= \frac{625}{1296} = \frac{1}{2}$$

The sun radiates maximum light-energy in the blue wave-length which is relatively short compared with the yellow or red wave lengths. Maximum scattering of Sunlight, therefore, takes place in the range of the blue light, within the first 200 kilometers of the atmosphere and give rise to the blue colour of the sky.

II. ARE WE ALONE IN THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE?

This question was raised probably since man dwelt the earth, but has not yet received the final answer. Scientifically speaking, it is acceptable to assume that wherever physical environments like these of the earth prevail over any other planets in the vast universe, life can evolve and beings can nourish and flourish with the passage of sufficient time up to the stage of human beings.

Miraculously enough, the Holy Qurân gave the answer to this question about 1500 years ago. Several verses refer (in various ways) to the existence of wise beings in heavens. Thus we read, for example what means :

1 - Seek they then other than Allah's religion? And to Him submitted whoever in the heavens and the earth.

- Al - Imran (83)-

﴿أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ ٱللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُۥٓ أَسْلَمَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ﴾ آل عمران (٨٣)

2 - Whoever in the heavens and the earth ask Him...

- Al - Rahman (29) -

﴿يَسْـَٔلُهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ....﴾ الرحمن (٢٩)

3 - And your Master best knows those who are in the heavens and the earth....

- Al - Israa (55) -

﴿وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ....﴾ الاسراء (٥٥)

4 - All those in the heavens and the earth ask of Him; every moment He is in a state (of glory).

- Al - Rahman (29) -

﴿يَسْـَٔلُهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِى شَأْنٍ ﴿٢٩﴾﴾ الرحمن (٢٩)

5 - There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes to Al - Rahman (the Beneficent) as a servant.

- Mariam (93) -

إِن كُلُّ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّآ ءَاتِى ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ عَبْدًا ﴿٩٣﴾﴾ مريم (٩٣)

6 - Have you not seen that to Allah makes submission whoever is in the heavens and whoever is in the earth....

- Al - Haj (18) -

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ...... ﴾ الحج (١٨)

7 - Have you not seen that Allah do glory for Him all those who are in the heavens and the earth....

- Al - Nur (41) -

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ﴾ النور (٤١)

8 - Say : No one in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen but Allah...

- Al - Naml (65) -

﴿ قُل لَّا يَعْلَمُ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلْغَيْبَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ﴾ النمل (٦٥)

9 - And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and what He has spread forth in both of them of living beings; and He is all-powerful togather them together when He wills.

- Al - Shura (29) -

﴿ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَثَّ فِيهِمَا
مِن دَآبَّةٍ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَآءُ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾ الشورى (٢٩)

10 - And to Allah makes obeisance every living creature that is in the heavens and that is in the earth and the angels (too) and they are not proud.

- Al - Nahl (49)-

﴿ وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾ النحل (٤٩)

This last verse is amongst the verses which clearly differenciate between angels and other beings, or material creatures, on planets (similar to our own earth) dispersed through the vast universe. In the age of science, astronomers believe that we are not alone in the entire universe.

III. SEVEN HEAVENS

Celestial bodies are of different sizes, nature and forms. The most common are : stars (including suns), planets, satellites (like the earth's moon), comets, meteorites and meteors. The so - called galaxies are formed of billions of stars within each individual galaxy. Solar systems generally include unique systems composed of : sum, planets, satellites, meteorites comets and meteors.

Evidently, these members comprise six types of celestial bodies, apart from the earth's atmosphere which also exists over our heads. Their total number is seven! The number seven, therefore, may be taken to stand for the different types of structure appearing over our heads. The Holy Qurân says what means :

1 - Blessed is He who made zodiacs in the heavens and made therein a lamp and a bright moon (reflecting light).

- Al - Furqan (61) -

﴿ تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ

فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَٰجًا وَقَمَرًا مُّنِيرًا ﴿٦١﴾ ﴾ الفرقان (٦١)

2 - And He has made subservient the sun ano tne moon, each one moves swiftly to an appointed time.

- Luqman (29) -

﴿ وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِىٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ﴾ لقمان (٢٩)

3 - ....And all float on in orbits.

- Yasin (40) -

﴿ .... وَكُلٌّ فِى فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ﴾ يس (٤٠)

4 - Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see....

- Al - Raad (2)-

﴿ اللَّهُ الَّذِى رَفَعَ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا .... ﴾ الرعد (٢)

5 - And He withholds the heavens from falling on the earth except with His permission.

- Al - Haj (65) -

﴿ وَيُمْسِكُ السَّمَآءَ أَن تَقَعَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِۦٓ ﴾ الحج (٦٥)

Surely, nothing falls from outer space and may reach the earth's surface except meteorites. The earth's atmosphere plays a big rôle in splitting them into fine dust, apart from a limited number of occasions in which the meteorites reached the earth's surface.

For a long time some people used to think that the heavens may be regarded as dwelling homes, mainly for ghosts, spirits and could be angels too!

Again, astronomically speaking, with respect to us on earth, however, the entire universe can be regarded as composed of seven heavens, one after the other as follows :

1 - The solar system (5 light hours in diameter).
2 - Our galaxy, or the so - called the "Milky way", (100,000 light

years in diameter).
3 - The "Local group", which contains 17 known galaxies spread over a region in space about 3 million light years. The nearest galaxy (in space) to our galaxy is called Andromeda. It is a member of this group, and lies a distance equal to 750,000 light years from the milky way. There may exist a few undiscovered members, notably in regions hidden by the dust of the milky way. The diameter of the sphere enclosing all the members of the local group averages 2.3 million light years.
4 - The cluster of the first order :
Beyond the local group, at a distance of a few times its diameter, we find another similar group of galaxies like the local group. The nearest rich cluster of galaxies is the Virgo cluster. It lies at about 50 - 70 million light years from us. The linear diameter of the cluster is about 7 million light years.

5 - The cluster of the second order :

Several experts in astronomy are of the opinion that a large collection of clusters of the first order comprises a second order cluster. The overall diameter of this supercluster is between 100 and 150 million light years. The total mass of this supercluster is not less than 10 raised the power 15 (10^{15}) solar masses.

6 - Clusters of the third order :

These are supposed to be groups of clusters that exist beyond the second order cluster. They are not easily conspicuous to us. The most remote clusters of this order at distances between 2 and 3 billion light years. The total volume of the space occupied by the remote clusters is 10 raised to the piower 14 times the space occupied by our own galaxy.

Evidently the universe is a universe of galaxies. Also, there is a tendency for glaxies to be found in clusters, and for the

clusters themselves to be grouped in second order clusters.

7 - Galaxies as Radio Sources :

Since World War (1), some thousands of discrete radio sources, each occupying a small region in space, have been discovered and catalogued. There is evidence that most of those distant sources are extragalactic. At present, there are about 100 radio sources that have been identified with individual galaxies. The radio galaxies fall into two groups: normal and peculiar galaxies emitting radio waves. Some of these galaxies have been observed to be receding from us at about 15 per cent of the speed of light! Others recede at greater speeds, approaching 80 per cent of the velocity of light!! They are called (quasi - stars) or (quasars). They are between 5 and 15 billion light years away from us. Allah says in the Holy Qurân what means :

1 - Indeed I could swear by the sites of the stars; and it is a great oath if you are aware of them.

- Al - Waqia (75 - 76) -

﴿ فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِمَوَٰقِعِ ٱلنُّجُومِ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَقَسَمٌ لَّوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾ ﴾

الواقعة (٧٥ - ٧٦)

2 - Verily in the creation of the heavens and of the earth, and in the variation of night and day, are signs for those of understanding minds.

- Al - Imran (190)-

﴿ إِنَّ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ
ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٠﴾ ﴾ آل عمران (١٩٠)

3 - ... Those who muse on the creation of the heavens and of the

earth : O our Master, say they, You have not created this in vain; glory be to You...

- Al - Imran (191) -

﴿ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ

ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ ﴾ آل عمران (١٩١)

4 - .... Do they not consider the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what things Allah has created?....

- Al - Aaraf (185) -

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا۟ فِى مَلَكُوتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ مِن شَىْءٍ ﴾

الأعراف (١٨٥)

5 - Surely Allah upholds the heavens and the earth lest they come to naught, and if they come to naught none can uphold them after Him....

- Fatir (41) -

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُمْسِكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ

وَٱلْأَرْضَ أَن تَزُولَا ۚ وَلَئِن زَالَتَآ إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ

مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِۦٓ ....﴾ فاطر (٤١)

Finally, to those who just argue without back-ground of knowledge, the Holy Qurân says what means :

6 - .... Say; have you any knowlege so you would bring it forth to us? You only follow conjecture and you only tell lies.

- Al -Anaam (148) -

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ عِندَكُم مِّنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَآ

إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَإِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا تَخْرُصُونَ ﴿١٤٨﴾ ﴾ الأنعام (١٤٨)

7 - And when it is said to them come to that which Allah has revealed and to the Messenger, they say : Sufficient for us is that wherein we found our fathers; (what!) even though their fathers knew nothing and had no guidance !

- Al - Maida (104) -

﴿ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ

وَإِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ قَالُوا۟ حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَآ

أَوَلَوْ كَانَ ءَابَآؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾ المائدة (١٠٤)

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